/41 cont./

634 About twenty villages were under the jurisdiction of each great chief. He himself was elected for life by the plenary assembly of all the arms-bearing men of those villages over [666] which he was to rule. All the men over 16-17 years of age had the right to vote; women were excluded from voting.

It was left to each village to decide which great chief it wished to be under. If, therefore, after the death of a great chief who had ruled over twenty villages, twelve villages voted for one great chief and the remaining eight villages for another, two great chiefs were elected, and each one ruled over those villages that had elected him. As a consequence, after the death of each great chief the administrative unit changed, though this did not necessarily bring about a reduction in the size of the administrative units in the course of time, for every village wanted to be under the most powerful neighboring great chief.

634 687 There was an exception to the lifetime tenure of the great chief in case he was guilty of grave negligence. The village chiefs then convoked a new plenary assembly, which elected a new great chief. In any event, the election of the great chief took place in the largest village of the administrative district of the deceased or deposed great chief.

634 622 681 The great chief had to appoint the village chiefs. Moreover, he was the judge in all important affairs. If he meted out fines, the money involved was distributed according to the following system: the first part was distributed in equal shares to the arms-bearing men within his district. The second part was double the amount of the first and was distributed in equal shares to the village chiefs. The third part, three times the amount of the first part, went to the great chief and constituted an important source of income for him. He derived additional income from the tax which had to be paid once a year and amounted to four piasters (equivalent to about one mark) per person and one piaster for each rice field. The great chief could use the money as he saw fit.

634 [681] [651]

/42 cont./

623 The assembly of all the arms-bearing men of a village /43/ is usually convoked by the village chief in all cases pertaining to the welfare of the village. Such cases are: the laying out of rice fields, the selection of a settlement site in the relocation of villages, communal hunts, and the like. The majority vote decides the issue. The popular assembly, however, may be convoked even against the will of the village chief if the villagers want to file a complaint against their village chief with the great chief. In this case the assembly convenes upon the initiative of the village elders.

634 The popular assembly of all arms-bearing men within the administrative district of a great chief had far greater power. It met only when needed; its decisions had to be unanimous. It was convoked by the great chief in order to pass resolutions about important matters. Such important matters were decisions about war and peace and measures to be taken to celebrate the festival of the New Year or the harvest festival. The resolutions passed by the popular assembly of the great chief were of an advisory nature, for the great chief was under no obligation to comply with them. Actually, of course, he avoided acting against the voice of his people. In one case, however, the great chief was absolutely bound to accept the decision of the popular assembly: when the latter had decided on his removal. The great popular assembly was, at the same time, a court of appeal for verdicts of the great chief, and its decisions were regarded as irrevocable.

634 693 The expenses of a popular assembly had to be paid by the person who summoned it, hence either by the great chief himself or the party who had moved that it be convened. Among the expenses there were the provisions for all the assembly-participants at the place of the meeting, but no compensation was given for the journey to and fro. Moreover, in connection with minor cases, two chickens and plenty of alcohol were collected for the great chief and the elders; in connection with major affairs, one or more pigs.